

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, OVIP (SECDEF BROWN)

SUBJECT: NPG NEWS CONFERENCE APRIL 19, 1978

1. FOLLOWING IS VERBATIM TEXT NPG PRESS CONFERENCE ON
APRIL 19. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS WERE US SECDEF HAROLD
BORWN, NATO SECGEN JOSEPH LUNS AND DANISH MINISTER OF
DEFENSE POUL SOGAARD. CONFERENCE CONSISTED OF QUESTIONS
AND ANSWERS.

BEGIN TEXT:

- Q. I REFER TO THE NEXT TO THE LAST PARAGRAPH IN
PAGE 2 IN THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE. IS THERE ANY SIGN OF ANY
POSITIVE SOVIET RESPONSE TO THE RESTRAINT YOU'RE REFERRING
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TO HERE AND WHAT IT'S BEEN?

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- A. SECRETARY LUNS: HITHERTO, NO. NEXT QUESTION.
YES.
-
- Q. CAN I FOLLOW UP ON THAT, SIR, WHAT COULD THOSE
SIGNS BE?

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- A. SEC LUNS: THEY COULD BE VARIOUS KINDS. FIRST
OF ALL, IT COULD BE A REPLY THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS
PREPARED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER MULTILATERALLY AT THE NEXT
DISARMAMENT SESSION IN NEW YORK WHERE VERY MANY PROMINENT
POLITICIANS AND MINISTERS WILL BE PRESENT. IT COULD ALSO
BE A PRIVATE TYPE TO WASHINGTON, TO THE UNITED STATES,
THAT THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA COULD DISCUSS IT FIRST
AMONG THEMSELVES AND THEN WITH THE ALLIANCE. IT MIGHT BE
A UNILATERAL DECLARATION. BUT NOTHING OF THE KIND HAS
OCCURRED. THE ONLY SIGNS WERE NEGATIVE.

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- SEC BROWN: THERE HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE PUBLIC
STATEMENTS. IT'S TOO EARLY TO SAY THAT THOSE ARE THE
FINAL INDICATIONS OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR AND REACTION.

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- Q. HOW LONG ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE THE SOVIET
UNION AND AT WHAT STAGE WILL YOU MAKE THE FINAL ASSESSMENT
AS TO WHETHER THEY HAVE EXERCISED THIS RESTRAINT?

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- A. SEC LUNS: THERE WOULD BE NO DATES AS YET, BUT
I WOULD SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE A COUPLE OF MONTHS, WOULDN'T
YOU MR. BROWN?

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- SEC BROWN: THERE'S NO DEADLINE AND NONE IS
INTENDED. WE'RE GOING AHEAD WITH THE MODERNIZATION OF
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THE SPECIFIC SYSTEMS INTO WHICH AN ENHANCED RADIATION
CAPABILITY COULD BE INCORPORATED, BUT WE'RE NOT
INCORPORATING THAT ENHANCED RADIATION CAPABILITY. IT
WILL TAKE PERHAPS A YEAR OR PERHAPS EVEN TWO YEARS TO
BRING ON THE NEXT GENERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR THOSE
PARTICULAR VEHICLES AND AFTER THAT THEN WE COULD, SHOULD
THE PRESIDENT SO DECIDE, INCORPORATE ENHANCED RADIATION
CHARACTERISTICS IN A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. BUT THERE'S
NO FIXED DEADLINE FOR SOVIET REACTION.

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- Q. TALKING ABOUT THIS ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON,
IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT THE FRENCH HAVE TESTED A SIMILAR
WEAPON IN THE PACIFIC. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THAT?

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- A. SEC BROWN: I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT TO MAKE ON
THAT SPECIFIC REPORT. THE US HAS ALSO TESTED THEM. IT'S
BEEN A QUESTION OF WHETHER WE SHOULD PRODUCE AND DEPLOY
THEM. THE THING TO KEEP IN MIND, THE PRINCIPAL FACT TO
KEEP IN MIND, IS THAT SUCH WEAPONS CAN BE TESTED, CAN BE
PRODUCED, CAN BE DEPLOYED AND, AT LEAST IN A CLOSED
SOCIETY LIKE THE SOVIET UNION, THERE'S NO WAY FOR THOSE
OF US NOT PRIVY TO THE SOVIET DECISION-MAKING APPARATUS

TO KNOW WHETHER ANY OF THOSE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED. SO
THAT IN THAT PARTICULAR CASE, THE WEST WOULD HAVE NO BASIS
FOR A JUDGEMENT ON WHETHER ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS HAD
BEEN TESTED, PRODUCED OR DEPLOYED. IN THE CASE OF FRANCE,
I WOULD WAIT AND SEE WHAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SAID.

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- Q. SECRETARY BROWN, COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING MORE
ABOUT ONE OF THE HANG-UPS IN SALT? THE HANG-UP ABOUT THE

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RUSSIAN DEMAND FOR AN ISOLATION OF THE CRUISE MISSILE
TECHNOLOGY TO THE US. HOW ARE YOU GOING TO MEET THAT
DEMAND?

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- A. THE SOVIETS AND US ARE NEGOTIATING, IN SALT,
LIMITATIONS ON CRUISE MISSILE DEPLOYMENT AND ON CRUISE
MISSILE TESTING, THOSE ARE NOT THE SAME LIMITATIONS FOR
THOSE TWO ASPECTS. IN RESPECT TO LAND-LAUNCHED, SEA-
LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES, THE LIMITATION WILL APPLY ONLY
DURING THAT PERIOD OF THE PROTOCOL, WHICH IS A PERIOD

WHOSE LENGTH IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION BUT WE ARE TALKING
OF A PERIOD OF 2 OR 3 YEARS. NATURALLY THE UNITED STATES
WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD CIRCUMVENT THE MEANING
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OR THE PURPOSE OF THE TREATY AND IS PREPARED SO TO STATE.
HOWEVER, THE WHOLE QUESTION OF TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY IS
ANOTHER MATTER. THE UNITED STATES IS NOT GOING TO MAKE A
COMMITMENT THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL IT TRANSFER
SOME TECHNOLOGY TO ALLIES, AND I THINK THAT WE CAN WORK
OUT WITH THE SOVIET UNION WHAT NONCIRCUMVENTION MEANS.

- Q. MAY (INAUDIBLE) INTERPRET THAT IN SUCH A WAY THAT
YOU WOULD HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A NEW SALT TREATY AND THE
RUSSIAN DEMANDS FOR AN ISOLATION OF THE CRUISE MISSILE
TECHNOLOGY, THEY ARE GOING TO SAY NO TO A NEW TREATY.

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- A. NO. THAT'S NOT SOMETHING I AM PREPARED TO TAKE
BECAUSE ISOLATION OF CRUISE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY IS NOT A
TERM THAT IS DEFINED WELL ENOUGH TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT.
IT ALSO ASSUMES THAT SOMEHOW THE UNITED STATES IS THE SOLE
POSSESSOR OF ELECTRONIC OR PROPULSION OR OTHER SYSTEMS
THAT OTHER PEOPLE CAN'T REPRODUCE, AND THAT ISN'T THE CASE.

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- Q. YOU HAVE THE RUSSIAN DEMAND FOR IT?

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- A. THAT'S NOT THE CASE EITHER. THE SOVIET POSITION
IS BEING DISCUSSED WITH THE US AND I WILL NOT CHARACTER-
IZE IT IN DETAIL. THOSE TALKS ARE, TO SOME DEGREE, STILL
PRIVATE AND WHAT THE SOVIET'S POSITION IS ON THESE MATTERS
AND WHAT THE US POSITION IS EXPRESSED IN THOSE TALKS.

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- Q. MR. SECRETARY, IN CONNECTION WITH THE MODERNI-
ZATION PROGRAM, IN PARTICULAR THE 8-INCH, WHAT IS THE
EFFECT OF THE NEW NUCLEAR SHELLS THAT WILL BE COMING IN
AS COMPARED TO THE NEUTRON SHELL; ARE THEY GREATER, LESS
OR WHAT?

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- A. I DON'T WANT TO DISCUSS YIELDS OR WEIGHTS OR
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OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF NUCLEAR DESIGN. THOSE ARE OTHER
FEATURES WHICH ARE ALSO NOT YET FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION.
BUT THEY ARE MORE MODERN IN THE SENSE THAT THEY CAN ALLOW
EASIER HANDLING; ONE CAN SHIFT MORE RAPIDLY FROM THE
CONVENTIONAL TO NUCLEAR SHELLS. THEY WILL ALLOW INCREASE
IN THE RANGE OF THE 8-INCH SHELL AND THEREBY ALL THESE

CHARACTERISTICS WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE AND WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF OBSOLESCENCE.

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- Q. TALKING ABOUT THE CRUISE PROTOCOL, DO YOU ENVISION TO REOPEN THE TALKS ON THE PROTOCOL TO GET A COMPENSATION ON THE SS-20 RESULTS.

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- A. SS-20 IS NOT A SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN SALT UNDER THE GROUND RULES OF SALT II. SALT III TALKS WHICH WE WOULD EXPECT TO BEGIN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER A SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF SALT II AGREEMENT, WHOSE EXACT TIMING AND PROBABILITY NO ONE KNOWS FOR SURE, WILL, OF COURSE, BE OPEN TO THE RAISING OF NEW TOPICS BY BOTH SIDES. AND I AM NOT PREPARED TO EXCLUDE OR INCLUDE SPECIFIC THINGS FOR THAT NOW. BUT I WOULD NOT EXPECT SS-20 TO BE DISCUSSED OR TO BE INCLUDED IN THAT SALT AGREEMENT.

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- Q. CAN I FOLLOW UP THAT, SIR, BY ASKING FIRST WHAT'S YOUR BEST PREDICTION NOW ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE SALT II AGREEMENT AND WHETHER WE WILL WAIT FOR SENATE APPROVAL BEFORE STARTING TO EMBARK ON SALT III?

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- A. MY OWN JUDGEMENT IS THAT THERE IS A REASONABLY

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GOOD CHANCE OF A SALT II AGREEMENT SOMETIME THIS YEAR, I WOULDN'T SAY WHETHER IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS OR LATER ON THIS YEAR, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW. WITH RESPECT TO STARTING SUBSEQUENT TALKS, MY RECOLLECTION IS THAT THE TALKS ON SALT II STARTED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE ABM TREATY AND THE INTERIM AGREEMENT ON STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE FORCES. I WOULD EXPECT THAT TO HAPPEN IN THIS CASE AS WELL. THESE THINGS TAKE LONG ENOUGH TO COME TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION SO THAT I DON'T THINK AN IDLE DELAY IS A GOOD IDEA.

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- Q. COULD YOU GIVE US YOUR REACTION TO THE SENATE RATIFICATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY IN LIGHT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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GENERAL TORRIJOS' THREAT TO SHUT DOWN THE CANAL IF IT HAD NOT BEEN RATIFIED BY CONGRESS? DID YOU HAVE ANY PLANS, DID THE US HAVE ANY PLANS TO GO IN THERE IN A MILITARY WAY OR WHATEVER AND IF SO, COULD YOU SPELL THIS OUT?

-

- A. I WILL ANSWER THAT QUESTION IN THREE PARTS. THE PASSAGE OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES, I THINK, IS A SIGN THAT US RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA IN GENERAL AND PANAMA IN PARTICULAR, HAVE COME OF AGE AND IT'S ALSO A SIGN THAT THE US SENATE IS ABLE TO AND DOES APPROVE CORRECT STEPS PROPOSED BY THE ADMINISTRATION. THE STATEMENTS MADE AFTER THE RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES AS TO WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED HAD THEY NOT BEEN RATIFIED, I THINK, ARE DIFFICULT TO ATTACH ANY PARTICULAR WEIGHT TO, NO MATTER WHO THEY'RE MADE BY. I THINK IT WOULD NOT HELP FOR ME TO SAY WHAT THE US SITUATION WOULD HAVE BEEN HAD THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES NOT BEEN RATIFIED. I WOULD CERTAINLY AGREE THAT IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN A GOOD SITUATION FOR ANYONE - PANAMA OR THE UNITED STATES OR ANYONE ELSE. WE DON'T TALK ABOUT MILITARY CONTINGENCY PLANS. WE HAVE ALL KINDS OF CONTINGENCY PLANS AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE ALL KINDS OF THEM. SEC LUNS: MAY I ADD THAT TO AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER LIKE MYSELF, IT WOULD SEEM THAT FOR PRES TORRIJOS TO CLOSE THE CANAL WOULD NOT BE VERY EASY. THAT IS ALL I WANTED TO SAY.

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- A. IN ANY EVENT, MR SECRETARY GENERAL, THE TREATIES PROVIDE THE CANAL WILL BE KEPT OPEN AND NEUTRAL AND AVAILABLE, AND THAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE TREATY AND BOTH

PANAMA AND THE US ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO IT.

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- Q. MR SECRETARY, COULD YOU TELL US SOMETHING MORE
ABOUT THE MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT OF THE THEATER
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NUCLEAR FORCES OF NATO IN EUROPE, IN PARTICULAR WITH THE
OPTION OF LAND-AND SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE DEPLOYMENT
AND THEIR MATCHING AGAINST THE POSSIBLE RESTRICTION AND
DEPLOYMENT OF THE SS-20?

-

- A. IN THE FIRST PLACE, THESE MATTERS WERE
DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH AMONG THE MINISTERS PRESENT AT
THE SESSION OF NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP. THE UNITED STATES'
POSITION AND ACTION ON THE PARTICULAR CLASS OF WEAPONS
SYSTEMS IS THAT WE CONTINUE TO DEVELOP GROUND-LAUNCHED AND
SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES OF INTERMEDIATE RANGE AND
EXPECT THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENT WILL CONTINUE AND CONTINUE TO
BE PERMITTED UNDER A SALT II AGREEMENT. THERE ARE LIKELY
TO BE DEPLDYMENT RESTRICTIONS DURING THE PERIOD OF THE
PROTOCOL, WHICH AS I SAY IS RELATIVELY SHORT, AND DURING
WHICH NEITHER GROUND NOR SEA-LAUNCHED MISSILES WOULD BE
READY FOR DEPLOYMENT IN ANY EVENT AT THE RANGES THAT WE'RE
TALKING ABOUT. THAT OPTION WILL REMAIN OPEN AND WILL BE
CONSIDERED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
ALLIANCE. IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT AS ONE THINKS OF LONG
TERM NOW, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THERE BE AN OVERALL BALANCE
NOT ADVERSE TO THE ALLIANCE IN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY. I
WOULD NOT WANT TO SEPARATE IT VERY NARROWLY INTO RANGES
BETWEEN A THOUSAND KILOMETERS AND 1100 KILOMETERS OR
2500 KILOMETERS AND 2600 KILOMETERS. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT
THAT THE ALLIANCE HAVE NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES ACROSS THE
BOARD AND THE UNITED STATES IS KEEPING THAT OPTION OPEN.

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- Q. FOLLOWING ON SECRETARY BROWN'S COMMENTS THAT
DEFINE THE TERM OF CREDIBILITY PERCEPTIONS, I AM WONDERING

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WHERE IN HIS VIEW THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION HAS BEEN IMPLYING THAT DETERRENCE IS A MATTER OF CREDIBILITY AND PERCEPTIONS. I AM WONDERING WHERE IN HIS VIEW THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION ON NEUTRON WEAPONS LEAVE THE CREDIBILITY AND DETERRENT VALUE OF THE EXISTING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

-

- A. WHERE IT WAS.

- Q. UNCHANGED?

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- A. UNCHANGED. THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS THAT ARE DEPLOYED IN EUROPE ARE A VERY SUBSTANTIAL DETERRENT BECAUSE THE SOVIETS OR ANY PRUDENT INDIVIDUAL OR ANY PRUDENT UNCLASSIFIED

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GOVERNMENT MUST RECOGNIZE THAT A MASSIVE ATTACK, A CONVENTIONAL ATTACK, CARRIES A SUBSTANTIAL RISK OF EXCALATION INTO THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. TACTICAL AT FIRST, AND THEN WITH A QUITE HIGH POSSIBILITY INTO THE STRATEGIC RANGE. SO THAT THE DETERRENCE WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE THAT WAY. ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS WOULD HAVE, OR WOULD IF THEY ARE DEPLOYED, PROVIDED ADDITIONAL NUCLEAR CAPABILITY. BUT, WOULD NOT, I BELIEVE CHANGE THE DETERRENT FACTOR. END TEXT. BENNETT

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